

A 1609/504.

LETTER

FROM

The House of COMMONS assembled in

THE

PARLIAMENT of ENGLAND
at Westminster.

To the Right Honorable and Right Reverend,

THE

Lords, Ministers and others of the present

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

of the Church of SCOTLAND sitting at EDINBURGH,

CONTAINING

A NARRATIVE

OF THE

Proceedings of the Parliament of *England* in the Work of Re-
formation, and of their Resolutions to maintain the Government of the
Kingdom established by Law, and of their Endeavors for Settlement
of Peace, and for Preservation of the Union between the
two Kingdoms of *England* and *Scotland*.





For the Right Reverend, Mr. *George Gillespie*,
Moderator of the General Assembly of the
Church of *Scotland* at *Edinburgh*.

S I R,

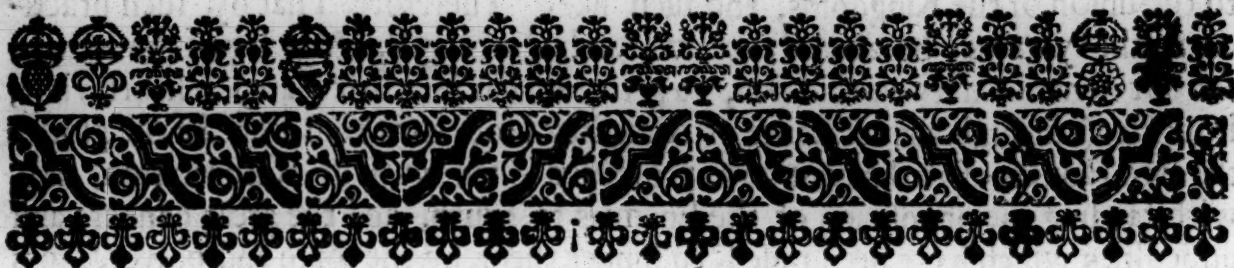
I Am commanded by the Commons
assembled in the Parliament of *Eng-
land*, to send you the inclosed Papers,
which they desire you to communi-
cate from them unto the Right Honourable and
Right Reverend, the Lords, Ministers and o-
thers of the present General Assembly of the
Church of *Scotland*, or to their Commissioners :
which being all I have in Command, I shall on-
ly adde, that I am,

Westminster, August 3.
1648.

S I R,
Your very loving Friend,

William Lenthall,
Speaker.





EE the Commons assembled in the Parliament of *England*, taking it into our consideration, That however the late possessing of *Berwick* and *Carlisle*, and the coming of the Scottish Army and Forces into this Kingdom, bee most notorious and unparalleled breaches of the Solemn League & Covenant, and the many Treaties, National Agreements, and Acts of Parliament passed both in *England* and *Scotland*.

Yet, because we are assured these impious and unwarrantable Actions cannot be done with the Approbation and Consent of the Religious and welaffected people of the Kingdom of *Scotland*, and that we understand there are very few amongst these who are in this Ingagement against us, that first ingaged with us in the Covenant and Cause, but such as have been professed Enemies to them, however they be now content to pretend thereunto, that they may the better deceive the people of this Kingdom: We are unwilling to impute such Evils to the Nation in general, but to those persons that own and appear in them, whom we are confident, God (that hath still so remarkably manifested his displeasure against Truce-breakers) in his due time will judge, whatever we may suffer in the mean while.

Therefore we now send to you, that it may appear we will not by any provocation be induced to withdraw our selves from those in *Scotland* who retain their former Principles, and still own the Cause wherein wee have (with blessing from heaven) been so long engaged and solemnly United.

And because the enemies thereof have been many industrious of prosecuting a design to hinder the Work of Reformation in this Kingdom, by raising many Scandals and Reproaches upon us; and by unworthy Insinuations of our Ends and Intentions, and false Representations of our Actions and Proceedings, which they have framed suitable to the severall present stirring distempers, the better to foment discontents in all sorts of people against us; charging us, That we do not intend any thing in the Work of Reformation (though they do more malign what we have done already, then desire we should do more) That we have a purpose to alter the Government of the Kingdom, That we are enemies to Peace, and

to the union of the Kingdoms, and such like. Therefore, That by such practices neither you may be abused, nor we further wronged, Wee have thought fit for our own necessary vindication, to give you (in the first place) a short view, how far (through the assistance of Almighty God, to whom alone be the glory) the two Houses of Parliament have proceeded in the work of Reformation, notwithstanding the opposition of the Enemies to Truth, and the great dangers and difficulties which have been raised, to hinder them, by the force and power, Plots and designs of the Popish, Prelatical and Malignant party in this Kingdom, with whom the Scottish Army are now joyned in Forces and Counsels.

It is very well known how great a party in this Kingdom were engaged for upholding of Prelacie, yet they, notwithstanding all discouragements and hazards to themselves, have taken away and extirpated that Government, so disagreeable to what is practiced in other Reformed Churches, and prejudiciall to the power of Godliness.

And because the peace of the Church, and power of Religion cannot long continue without good Order and Discipline established therein, they called an Assembly of Godly, Learned, and Orthodox Divines from all parts of the Kingdom, with whom some Commissioners of the Church of Scotland joyned, to sit at *Westminster*, and after consultation had with them, Both Houses took away the Service Book, commonly called *The Book of Common Prayer*, and established *A Directory for Worship*, commanding the practice of it in all the Churches and Chappels of this Kingdom: And, in stead of Episcopacy they have set up Presbyteriall Government in the Church, which is already settled in many parts of the Kingdom, and do (by Gods assistance) resolve to pursue the further perfecting and establishment of it in all parts, both in *England* and *Ireland*.

They have approved and passed *The Confession of Faith* (or *Articles of Christian Religion*) as it came from the Assembly of Divines, with some small Alterations (onely some small part is yet under consideration) the rest being printed and published by Authority of Parliament.

They have passed a greater and less Catechism that came from the Assembly of Divines.

They have taken away all Superstitious Ceremonies and Popish Innovations.

They have given Authority for the Demolishing of all Representations of any persons of the Trinity, Saint or Angel, and taking away all Altars, Crosses, Crucifixes, Pictures, and all other Monuments of Idolatry and Superstition in any Church, Chappel or Place within this Kingdom.

They have passed an Ordinance for the punishing of Blasphemies and Heresies.

They have passed an Ordinance for the Ejecting of scandalous Ministers and Schoolmasters, and thereupon have removed many, in whose stead they have placed godly and able Men.



They have passed an Ordinance, That none shall enter into the work of the Ministry, but such as are Ordained thereto.

They have given all the Incouragement, and made the best provision they could for the maintenance of a godly Preaching Ministry through the Kingdom, not onely in removing the Ignorant and Scandalous, but in augmenting Maintenance for painful Ministers, both out of the Impropropriations of Bishops, the Estates and Revenues of Deans and Chapters, and out of the Impropropriations of Delinquents, which they bought out and setled upon Churches that wanted Maintenance, to a very great value.

They have purged the Universities and chief Schools of the Kingdom (which are the Seminaries of Learning, and Education of Youth) of many Heads of Houses, Fellows and Schollers as were Superstitious, Prelatical and Malignant, and have placed in their stead such as are wel-affected to Reformation of Religion, and Uniformity with other Reformed Churches.

They have passed several Ordinances for the better Observation of the Lords-day, and days of publique Fast and Thanksgiving, and have condemned all Licentious practices upon those days; and have ordered the Books formerly written in favour of them, to be publicly burnt.

They have suppressed all Stage-Plays and Interludes (the Nurseries of Vice and Prophaneness.)

And although we must needs say, That the greatest lett and impediment which we have met with in settling the Reformation of Religion (according to the Covenant) hath come from His Majesty, who by His refusing hitherto to grant our Desires for the taking away of Episcopacy and the Service-Book, and to settle the Directory for Worship, and Presbyterian Government; and by denying his concurrence to establish them by Act of Parliament, hath given great occasion to men of unsound Judgements, to spread their Opinions and Errors (which is not unusual in times of Reformation) when the settling of it is long delayed.

And further, by his declaring in his late Message from the Isle of *Wight*, That he thinks himself obliged both as a Christian and as a King, to employ whatever power God shall put in his hand for the upholding of Episcopacy, he hath given great encouragement to the Popish, Malignant and Prelatical party to endeavor by Plots and Designs, and now again by open force, the re-introducing of Episcopacy and the Service-Book, which by the Conjunction of the Scottish Army with their Forces, they have now great hopes to effect; yet (by Gods assistance who hath helped us hitherto) it shall be our care and endeavour against all gainsayers and discouragements whatsoever, to proceed in the Work of Reformation untill it be perfected.

For other things wherewith we are commonly aspersed; as, That we sh

have intentions to alter the Fundamental Government of this Kingdom; both Houses have endeavored so to stop the mouth of malice by declaring several times formerly, and of late the 26. of *May*, That they will not alter the Government by *King, Lords and Commons*, that we shall need to say no more of it.

And for our desires of Peace, our seven severall Addresses to the King, with Propositions for a safe and well-grounded Peace, will sufficiently speak for us: And although the severall denials which we have received from his Majestie formerly, and the present preparations for War by the Malignant party of both Kingdoms under pretence of Peace, might wholly discourage us, yet we (notwithstanding all the hazards that may attend it) now again agreed to try whether a Peace can be settled by a Treaty with his Majesty in the Isle of *Wight*, upon the Propositions presented to him at *Hampton-Court*, wherein we shall (by the help of God) approve our selves such as are both desirous of a firm Peace, and mindefull of the trust reposed in us by the People of this Kingdom, for the securing of Religion and their Liberties.

As for our desires to preserve the Union and Brotherly Agreement betwixt the Kingdoms, we shall not here say much about it, because the whole Transaction betwixt our Commissioners and the Parliament, and Committee of Estates of *Scotland* will be Printed, wherein it will appear what was offered, in order to give them real satisfaction in our Engagements to them for the Service of their Armies in *England* and *Ireland*, to which we could never get any Answer; and what the demanded in the name and by the command of both Houses, from the Parliament and Committee of Estates of *Scotland*, concerning severall English Delinquents and Incendiaries then in *Scotland*, which by Treaties and Acts of Parliament passed in both Kingdoms, ought to have been delivered to be tryed in the Kingdom of *England*; but in stead of giving them up, they were countenanced and encouraged, consulted and agreed with to seize and hold the Towns of *Berwick* and *Carlisle* in the Kingdom of *England*, which by Acts of Parliament, and severall Treaties and Agreements of both Kingdoms, were not to be garrisoned without the consent of both Parliaments.

And when in pursuance of those Treaties and Agreements, our Commissioners did declare those Traytors and Enemies to this Kingdom that had Garrisoned them, and required the like Declaration from the Parliament and Committee of Estates of *Scotland*, it would not be assented unto, although very often pressed; but in stead thereof, all manner of Provisions were sent unto them, and Commanders in those Garrisons (though many of them notorious Papists) much freedom and countenance to their proceedings by persons of eminent ver in *Scotland*; whereas notwithstanding we had notice there was some design for seizing these Towns, which might have been prevented by our timely setting Forces into them, yet to avoid the guilt of breach of Treaties, we rather

ther resolved to run the hazard which did ensue, then to bring that imputation upon our selves: and now it appears, these Towns were but taken in trust to be delivered to the Scottish Forces, who however they do publickly declare for Religion and the Covenant, yet the Papists and Delinquents, not only in *Berwick* and *Carlisle*, but in other parts of the Kingdom, who are professed Enemies to Religion and the Covenant, and do kill, plunder and pursue those who have been faithful in them, are so well satisfied of their ends and intentions, that they joyn and hazard their lives and fortunes with them.

Whilst these forementioned Councils and Compliances were thus one foot in *Scotland* with those that are declared Enemies to the Peace of this Kingdom, & the grounds of the Union of both Kingdoms; The Parliament of *Scotland* did send us a Paper of Desires, dated the 26 of *April* last, which in the Letter wherein they were inclosed are called Demands, that implies a right which upon examination will not be found; yet the Houses were so desirous to give the Parliament of *Scotland* all possible satisfaction, that they did not take exception thereunto, nor to the person by whom they were sent, who was accused before them for endeavoring the Revolt of the Forces under the Lord *Inchiquin* in *Ireland*, which then had happened; Nor did they insist upon the first granting of their aforesaid just Demands made to the Parliament and Committee of Estates of *Scotland*, but perceiving so strange an Alteration in *Scotland*, they judged it fit for them to try in the first place, whether *Scotland* would own the cause wherein we had both been engaged; And therefore (after our Commissioners had acquainted the Committee of Estates with our Declaration of the 6 of *May* last, concerning our full Resolutions to maintain and preserve inviolably the Solemn League and Covenant, and Treaties betwixt the Kingdoms) they did return Answer to this purpose, That we did offer to joyn with the Parliament of *Scotland* in the Propositions presented to the King at *Hampton-Court*, & in making such further proceedings thereupon as should be thought fit for the speedy Settlement of the peace of both Kingdoms and preservation of the Union, according to the Covenant and Treaties; And when we should receive their Answer thereunto, the Houses would be ready to give further satisfaction in those things which should not intrench upon the particular Interests of the Kingdom, and Priviledges of the Parliament of *England*. But to these, all the Answer our Commissioners could obtain from the parliament or Committee of Estates of *Scotland*, was, That they could return us no Answer, till just satisfaction were given to their Desires of the 26. of *April*.

Afterwards we agreed upon a Personal Treaty with the Kings Majesty upon the propositions, (He first consenting to three Propositions, which in substance had granted in former Messages) And the Houses sent to the Committee of Estate, that *Scotland* would joyn with them, and that they would prepare such propositions as they thought fit for that Kingdom: But to this neither we nor our Cor

millioners received any Answer, until a Scottish Army had invaded this Kingdom, and then it was sent with a Declaration; of which we wil say no more in this place, but that considering they were bound by Treaties and Act of Parliament to give us three months warning before their making War with us, it had been more Honorable that their Declaration had rather come before, then followed after their Army

By all which, and by their vigorous pursuing the raising of their army, before they sent their desires, and ever after, before they knew what Answer would be returned to them by the Houses, it doth appear, That this invasion was intended and resolved upon, let us say or do what we would; wherein they have too little considered how many obligations did lie upon them to the contrary; how much this their Engagement tends to the utter ruine of Poor *Ireland*, who by their drawing away so many of the British and other Forces to joyn with them, and disabling us to send them relief is exposed to eminent hazard; how much to the dishonor and danger of the Reformed Religion in all Christendom, and how highly the God of Truth and Peace is provoked by it; which evils seeing we have on our parts so much labored to prevent, we doubt not but God will be with us, and the prayers of his people for us; And that those who have dealt falsely in striking hands with the common Enemy, to kindle a new fire betwixt these Kingdoms, shal themselves perish therein.

H. Elsyng, Cler. Parl. D. Com.



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